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Washington, DC 20037

EXAMINER

BAUM, RONALD

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2136

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	03/16/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/874,220

Applicant(s)

KURODA ET AL.

Examiner

Ronald Baum

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 December 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4-7,9,11,12,14-20,23 and 24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3,8,10,13,21,22 and 25-27 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in reply to applicant's correspondence of 18 December 2006.
2. Claims 1- 27 are pending for examination.
3. Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 11, 12, 14-20, 23 and 24 are rejected.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 11, 12, 14-20, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sugahara, U.S. Patent 6,483,873.

5. As per claim 1; "A copyright protection method [col. 1, lines 10-17] for adding copy control information to an information signal in association with contents which are protected under copyright, the method comprising the processes of:

adding attributive information representing the attribution of a predetermined apparatus to the information signal when the information signal is propagated from the predetermined apparatus to an external apparatus; and

controlling the recording of the information signal on the basis of

the copy control information and

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the attributive information [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, *whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); 'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of an original signal is conveyed (e.g. by a recording medium or signal transmission medium) together with data expressing the original signal, whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of the original signal are generated by a reproduction apparatus which operates on the conveyed data, and whereby information specifying a degree of restriction which is actually applied to reproduction of the original signal is derived based on a combination of the restriction information conveyed by the data medium and the restriction information generated by the reproduction apparatus...'*]

wherein the process of controlling the recording of the information signal is a process to control the recording of the information signal in accordance with the copy control information and the attributive information indicating that the predetermined apparatus is a reproduction apparatus [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, *whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); 'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus ... generated by the reproduction apparatus...' is such that the claimed reproduction versus recording aspect of the applicant's claim language is not patently distinct, as broadly interpreted by the examiner, such that the recited rejection applies.]".*

6. Claim 2 **additionally recites** the limitation that; "The copyright protection method according to claim 1, wherein the attributive information is added by a reproduction apparatus for reproducing the information signal in association with the contents from a recording medium."

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The teachings of Sugahara suggest such limitations (col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); "... the invention provides a reproduction protection method comprising: attaching medium protection data to main data which are conveyed by a data medium, said main data representing an original signal; supplying the main data and medium protection data, via the data medium, to a reproduction apparatus; generating apparatus protection data by the reproduction apparatus; determining a protection level by combining the medium protection data and the apparatus protection data; and controlling the reproduction apparatus to utilize the main data to reproduce the original signal in accordance with the protection level.").

7. As per claim 4; "A reproducing method for reproducing an information signal in association with contents, which are protected under copyright, from a recording medium in accordance with copy control information, the method comprising the processes of:

adding the attributive information representing the attribution of a reproduction apparatus to the information signal when the information signal is reproduced and outputted from the reproduction apparatus to an external apparatus [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); 'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of an original signal is conveyed (e.g. by a recording medium or signal transmission medium) together with data expressing the original signal, whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of the original signal are generated by a reproduction apparatus which operates on the conveyed data, and whereby information specifying a degree of restriction which is actually applied to reproduction of the original signal is derived based on a combination of the restriction information conveyed

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by the data medium and the restriction information generated by the reproduction apparatus...'];

and

outputting the information signal to the external apparatus [(i.e., col. 1, lines 25-29),
whereas the content is clearly outputted when it is viewed, heard or copied],

wherein the attributive information indicates that the information signal is outputted from
the reproduction apparatus [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39);
'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus ... generated by the reproduction
apparatus...' is such that the claimed reproduction versus recording aspect of the applicant's
claim language is not patently distinct, as broadly interpreted by the examiner, such that the
recited rejection applies.]:".

Further, as per claim 5, this claim is the system claim for the method claim 4 above, and
is rejected for the same reasons provided for the claim 4 rejection.

8. Claim 6 ***additionally recites*** the limitation that; "The reproduction apparatus according to
claim 5, wherein the adding device replaces a portion of a digital signal in association with the
contents with data in accordance with a predetermined pattern in association with the attributive
information."

The teachings of Sugahara suggest such limitations (col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e.,
col. 2, lines 21-39); "... the invention provides a reproduction protection method comprising:
attaching medium protection data to main data ... via the data medium, to a reproduction
apparatus; generating apparatus protection data by the reproduction apparatus; determining a
protection level by combining the medium protection data and the apparatus protection data; and

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controlling the reproduction apparatus to utilize the main data to reproduce the original signal in accordance with the protection level.” Clearly involves inserting said copy control information into the data stream in an inherently formatted form (i.e., predetermined pattern).).

9. As per claim 7; “A recording method for recording an information signal in association with contents, which are protected under copyright, in a recording medium in accordance with copy control information, the method comprising the processes of:

inputting the information signal from an external apparatus;

discriminating

the copy control information of the inputted information signal and

the attributive information representing the attribution of the external apparatus;

and

controlling the recording of the information signal on the basis of the discrimination result [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); ‘providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of an original signal is conveyed (e.g. by a recording medium or signal transmission medium) together with data expressing the original signal, whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of the original signal are generated by a reproduction apparatus which operates on the conveyed data, and whereby information specifying a degree of restriction which is actually applied to reproduction of the original signal is derived based on a combination of the restriction information conveyed by the data medium and the restriction

information generated by the reproduction apparatus...', and further; (i.e., col. 1, lines 25-29, col. 5, lines 19-62), the content being viewed, heard or copied, whereas the process of copying clearly encompasses recording.],

wherein the process of controlling the recording of the information signal is a process to control the recording of the information signal in accordance with the copy control information and the attributive information indicating that the external apparatus is a reproduction apparatus [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); 'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus ... generated by the reproduction apparatus...' is such that the claimed reproduction versus recording aspect of the applicant's claim language is not patently distinct, as broadly interpreted by the examiner, such that the recited rejection applies.]".

Further, as per claim 9, this claim is the system claim for the method claim 7 above, and is rejected for the same reasons provided for the claim 7 rejection above.

10. As per claim 11; "A copyright protection method for adding copy control information to an information signal in association with contents which are protected under copyright, the method comprising the processes of:

performing an error correction by replacing information at a recording position set in advance with a predetermined attributive information when an information signal, in which error correction codes when the information is replaced with the predetermined attributive information are added, is reproduced from a recording medium; and

controlling the recording and the reproduction of the information signal on the basis of

the copy control information and

the predetermined attributive information [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); 'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of an original signal is conveyed (e.g. by a recording medium or signal transmission medium) together with data expressing the original signal, whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of the original signal are generated by a reproduction apparatus which operates on the conveyed data, and whereby information specifying a degree of restriction which is actually applied to reproduction of the original signal is derived based on a combination of the restriction information conveyed by the data medium and the restriction information generated by the reproduction apparatus...', and further, whereas '...reproduction limitation is controlled by controlling the accuracy of inverse DCT...dequantization in the dequantizer section 15b...is to selectively produce a degree of blurring... (i.e., col. 8, lines 18-col. 12, line 4)'] are all aspects of reproduction related error insertion, manipulation of the data, and subsequent correction upon reproduction/recording/copying, etc.]

wherein the process of controlling the recording of the information signal is a process to control the recording of the information signal in accordance with the copy control information and the attributive information indicating that the information signal is reproduced by a reproduction apparatus [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); 'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus ... generated by the reproduction apparatus...' is such that the claimed reproduction versus

recording aspect of the applicant's claim language is not patently distinct, as broadly interpreted by the examiner, such that the recited rejection applies.]”.

11. Claim 12 ***additionally recites*** the limitation that; “The copyright protection method according to claim 11, wherein the predetermined attributive information has a size exceeding a maximum data size in which the error correction can be performed.”.

The teachings of Sugahara suggest such limitations (col. 8, lines 18-col. 12, line 4, whereas the examiner assumes for the sake of applying art that “size exceeding the range of correction” will encompass the arbitrary state of error detection whereas the error has been detected because the number of data bits during (for example); “...reproduction limitation is controlled by *controlling the accuracy* of inverse DCT...*dequantization* in the dequantizer section **15b**...is to selectively produce a *degree of blurring*... (i.e., col. 8, lines 18-col. 12, line 4)” error correction would exceed the non-error data state.).

12. Claim 14 ***additionally recites*** the limitation that; “The copyright protection method according to claim 12, wherein the process of controlling the recording and the reproduction of the information signal is a process to forbid the recording of the information signal in the case that the copy control information represents a code for allowing the copy of the contents only once and the predetermined attributive information is detected in the recording position set in advance,

wherein the predetermined attributive information indicates that the information signal is reproduced by a reproduction apparatus [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines

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21-39); *'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus ... generated by the reproduction apparatus...' is such that the claimed reproduction versus recording aspect of the applicant's claim language is not patently distinct, as broadly interpreted by the examiner, such that the recited rejection applies.]*”.

The teachings of Sugahara suggest such limitations (col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas “information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of an original signal (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39)”, and, “medium protection data...the apparatus protection level ... plurality of values...different degrees of limitation (col. 5, lines 65-col. 6, line 43)” are broadly interpreted to correspond to “forbid[ing] the recording the information signal”).

13. As per claim 15; “A reproducing method for reproducing an information signal in association with contents, which are protected under copyright, from a recording medium in accordance with copy control information, the method comprising the processes of:

performing an error correction by replacing information at a recording position set in advance, with a predetermined attributive information when an information signal, in which error correction codes when the information is replaced with the predetermined attributive information are added, is reproduced from a recording medium [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); *'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of an original signal is conveyed (e.g. by a recording medium or signal transmission medium) together with data expressing the original signal, whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of the original signal are generated by a reproduction apparatus which operates on the conveyed data,*

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and whereby information specifying a degree of restriction which is actually applied to reproduction of the original signal is derived based on a combination of the restriction information conveyed by the data medium and the restriction information generated by the reproduction apparatus... ’, and further, whereas ‘...reproduction limitation is controlled by controlling the accuracy of inverse DCT...dequantization in the dequantizer section 15b...is to selectively produce a degree of blurring... (i.e., col. 8, lines 18-col. 12, line 4)’ are all aspects of reproduction related error insertion, manipulation of the data, and subsequent correction upon reproduction/recording/copying, etc.]; and

outputting a reproduction signal to the exterior [(i.e., col. 1, lines 25-29), whereas the content is clearly outputted when it is viewed, heard or copied],

wherein the predetermined attributive information indicates that the reproduction signal is outputted from a reproduction apparatus [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); ‘providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus ... generated by the reproduction apparatus...’ is such that the claimed reproduction versus recording aspect of the applicant’s claim language is not patently distinct, as broadly interpreted by the examiner, such that the recited rejection applies.]”;

Further, as per claim 17, this claim is the system claim for the method claim 15 above, and is rejected for the same reasons provided for the claim 15 rejection.

14. Claim 16 ***additionally recites*** the limitation that; “The reproducing method according to claim 15, wherein the predetermined attributive information has a size exceeding a maximum data size in which the error correction can be performed.”.

The teachings of Sugahara suggest such limitations (col. 8, lines 18-col. 12, line 4, whereas the examiner assumes for the sake of applying art that “size exceeding the range of correction” will encompass the arbitrary state of error detection whereas the error has been detected because the number of data bits during (for example); “...reproduction limitation is controlled by *controlling the accuracy* of inverse DCT...*dequantization* in the dequantizer section **15b**...is to selectively produce a *degree of blurring*... (i.e., col. 8, lines 18-col. 12, line 4)” error correction would exceed the non-error data state.).

Further, as per claim 18, this claim is the system claim for the method claim 16 above, and is rejected for the same reasons provided for the claim 16 rejection.

15. As per claim 19; “A recording method for recording an information signal in association with contents, which are protected under copyright, in a recording medium in accordance with copy control information, the method comprising the processes of:

inputting the information signal from

an external apparatus;

discriminating

the copy control information of

the information signal and

predetermined attributive information;

controlling the recording of the information signal on the basis of the discrimination

result; and

adding error correction codes to the information signal, the error correction codes being ones when information at a recording position set in advance is replaced with the predetermined attributive information [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); 'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of an original signal is conveyed (e.g. by a recording medium or signal transmission medium) together with data expressing the original signal, whereby information specifying a degree of restriction of reproduction of the original signal are generated by a reproduction apparatus which operates on the conveyed data, and whereby information specifying a degree of restriction which is actually applied to reproduction of the original signal is derived based on a combination of the restriction information conveyed by the data medium and the restriction information generated by the reproduction apparatus... ', and further, whereas '...reproduction limitation is controlled by controlling the accuracy of inverse DCT...dequantization in the dequantizer section 15b...is to selectively produce a degree of blurring... (i.e., col. 8, lines 18-col. 12, line 4)' are all aspects of reproduction related error insertion, manipulation of the data, and subsequent correction upon reproduction/recording/copying, etc., and further; (i.e., col. 1, lines 25-29, col. 5, lines 19-62), the content being viewed, heard or copied, whereas the process of copying clearly encompasses recording.],

wherein the process of controlling the recording of the information signal is a process to control the recording of the information signal in accordance with the copy control information and the predetermined attributive information indicating that the external

apparatus is a reproduction apparatus [col. 1, lines 20-col. 8, line 17, whereas (i.e., col. 2, lines 21-39); 'providing a reproduction protection method and apparatus ... generated by the reproduction apparatus...' is such that the claimed reproduction versus recording aspect of the applicant's claim language is not patently distinct, as broadly interpreted by the examiner, such that the recited rejection applies.]".

Further, as per claim 23, this claim is the system claim for the method claim 19 above, and is rejected for the same reasons provided for the claim 19 rejection.

16. Claim 20 ***additionally recites*** the limitation that; "The recording method according to claim 19, wherein the predetermined attributive information has a size exceeding the range of correction capability of an error correction using the error correction codes."

The teachings of Sugahara suggest such limitations (col. 8, lines 18-col. 12, line 4, whereas the examiner assumes for the sake of applying art that "size exceeding the range of correction" will encompass the arbitrary state of error detection whereas the error has been detected because the number of data bits during (for example); "...reproduction limitation is controlled by *controlling the accuracy* of inverse DCT...*dequantization* in the dequantizer section **15b**...is to selectively produce a *degree of blurring*... (i.e., col. 8, lines 18-col. 12, line 4)" error correction would exceed the non-error data state.).

Further, as per claim 24, this claim is the system claim for the method claim 20 above, and is rejected for the same reasons provided for the claim 20 rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

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17. Claims 3, 8, 10, 13, 21, 22 and 25-27 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Amendment

18. As per applicant's argument concerning the of lack of teaching by Sugahara of controlled recording and reproduction as a function of copy controlling and attributive information, the examiner has fully considered the arguments and finds them not to be persuasive. For example, claims 3, 8, 10, 13, 21, 22 and 25-27 clarify the distinction between the recording versus the reproduction aspects of the claim limitations per se, and would be required in the rejected claims to distinguish the claims over prior art and clarify the distinct aspects of these terms in the claim language. Therefore, the Sugahara external apparatus and associated information signals (content and control), as described in the reference, by embodiment, or description, is broad enough to encompass the aspects of the claim language of claim 1, as broadly interpreted by the examiner.

Conclusion


19. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from examiner should be directed to Ronald Baum, whose telephone number is (571) 272-3861, and whose unofficial Fax number is (571) 273-3861 and unofficial email is Ronald.baum@uspto.gov. The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Thursday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nasser Moazzami, can be reached at (571) 272-4195. The Fax number for the organization where this application is assigned is **571-273-8300**.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. For more information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Ronald Baum

NASSER MOAZZAMI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100


3,141,07

Patent Examiner

